

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Pelican Wire Company

Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Plunge into Lean Manufacturing for Pelican Wire

Client Profile:

The Pelican Wire Company, incorporated in 1979, is a small manufacturer located in Naples, Florida, that specializes in the custom insulation of wire for resistance heaters, thermocouples, and other specialty applications. Using various materials such as thermoplastics, glass, enamels, mica and Teflon, their 42 employees provide custom insulated wire to their diverse group of customers including distributors, end users and OEM's. Many of their specialty wire/insulation combinations have resulted in innovative products for both their customers and themselves.

Situation:

Recently, Pelican Wire moved all of its operations from four locations into one centralized building. Management saw this move as an opportunity to reassess how they conducted their manufacturing processes and look at ways to streamline operations while improving sales and saving money. To help identify areas to make changes and provide the necessary training to produce positive results, Pelican Wire called on the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP), a NIST MEP network affiliate, to help implement Lean Manufacturing techniques.

Solution:

Florida MEP staff worked with the Pelican Wire staff and management on the development of a Value Stream Map which literally mapped the flow of work from the beginning to the end of the production line of a product for one of Pelican's main customers. This enabled Florida MEP staff to quickly identify half a dozen areas where changes could be made to eliminate steps and improve productivity and quality. Lean 101 and 102 workshops were also conducted followed by Kaizen Blitz Events which highlighted small improvements that could be made in specific areas over a period of two or three days, resulting in large gains in efficiency and productivity.

Results:

- * Retained sales.
- * Increased sales by \$500,000.
- * Realized cost savings of more than \$200,000.
- * Hired 14 new employees.

Testimonial:

"The work we did with the Florida MEP helped us adapt to these changes. Sometimes when you add staff and increase the workload you have an issue meeting demand. Thanks to the Lean implementation and hard work of our employees, we haven't had those issues."

Bob Ferris, Manager of Operations

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